

News Release

Minnesota Rural Health Association Partners to Celebrate National Rural Health Day with Cyber Conference on "The Status of Rural Health in Minnesota" on Thursday, November 17, 2011, from Noon to 1 p.m.

By Itollefts on Tuesday, October 4, 2011

The Minnesota Rural Health Association (MRHA) will join the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health (NOSORH) and other state/national rural stakeholders in celebrating the first-ever National Rural Health Day on Thursday, November 17, 2011. Events recognizing National Rural Health Day and "Celebrating the Power of Rural" are being planned throughout the nation.



The MRHA is planning to mark the occasion by offering at no charge a cyber conference titled the "Status of Rural Health in Minnesota" presented by Paul Jansen, program manager for Trauma System and the Rural Health Advisory Committee, MN Dept of Health Office of Rural Health and Primary Care. The conference begins at noon. Those interested in registering should visit the association's website at [www.mnruralhealth.org](http://www.mnruralhealth.org) to register.

NOSORH created National Rural Health Day as a way to showcase rural America; increase awareness of rural health-related issues; and promote the efforts of NOSORH, State Offices of Rural Health and others in addressing those issues. Plans call for National Rural Health Day to become an annual celebration on the third Thursday of each November.

Approximately 62 million people - nearly one in five Americans - live in rural and frontier communities throughout the United States. "These small towns, farming communities and frontier areas are wonderful places to live and work; they are places where neighbors know each other and work together," notes Teryl Eisinger, NOSORH director. "The hospitals and providers serving these rural communities not only provide quality patient care, but they also help keep good jobs in rural America."

These communities also face unique healthcare needs. "Today more than ever, rural communities must tackle accessibility issues, a lack of healthcare providers, the needs of an aging population suffering from a greater number of chronic conditions, and larger percentages of un- and underinsured citizens," Eisinger says. "Meanwhile, rural hospitals are threatened with declining reimbursement rates and disproportionate funding levels that makes it challenging to serve their residents."

State Offices of Rural Health play a key role in addressing those needs. All 50 states maintain a State Office of Rural Health, each of which shares a similar mission: to foster relationships, disseminate information and provide technical assistance that improves access to and the quality of, health care for its rural citizens. In the past year alone, State Offices of Rural Health collectively provided technical assistance to more than 28,000 rural communities.

In Minnesota, for example, the Minnesota Rural Health Association supports rural citizens by executing their mission which is to bring together diverse interests to address rural health issues and advocate for and with rural Minnesotans. Their vision is to strengthen the rural voice on health care issues through dialogue, education and advocacy, with a focus on enhancing the accessibility, affordability, and quality of healthcare in rural Minnesota.

Additional information about National Rural Health Day can be found on the Web at [www.celebratepowerofrural.org](http://www.celebratepowerofrural.org). To learn more about NOSORH, visit our website; to learn more about the MN Rural Health Association, visit our website.

The MRHA contact is Judith Neppel, executive director, Minnesota Rural Health Association, at the University of Minnesota Crookston, 2900 University Ave., Selvig Hall 217, Crookston, Minn. 56716 or send an email to [jneppel@umn.edu](mailto:jneppel@umn.edu)

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